

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /081 W

----- 033216

R 250546 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 991

INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPACREP CANBERRA

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HONG KONG FOR AMBASSADOR GREEN

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AS

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER'S COMPREHENSIVE SPEECH ON AUSTRALIAN
FOREIGN POLICY MAY 24

PART I OF III

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: (THIS CABLE WILL BE FOLLOWED BY TWO OTHERS
DEALING WITH PORTIONS OF SUBJECT SPEECH ON U. S. AND JOINT
FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA AND ECONOMIC MATTERS RESPECTIVELY.
TAKEN TOGETHER, THEY REPRESENT HIGHLIGHTS OF SPEECH. FULL
TEXT TRANSMITTED TO EA/ ANZ VIA AIR POUCH MAY 25.) IN WIDE- RANGING
AND COMPREHENSIVE SPEECH ABOUT AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY MAY 24,
PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM COVERED MAIN ELEMENTS OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S
APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY IN PAST FIVE MONTHS. PARTICULAR
EMPHASIS IN SPEECH WAS GIVEN TO REAFFIRMATION OF PRIME MINISTER'S
REGARD FOR INITIATIVES IN FOREIGN POLICY TAKEY BY PRESIDENT NIXON
AND UPON ENLARGED ROLE WHICH AUSTRALIA SEES FOR ITSELF IN HELPING
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TO MEET THE WORLD NEED FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES IN FUTURE. INITIAL PART OF SPEECH GIVES DUE CREDIT TO PREVIOUS AUSTRALIAN

GOVERNMENTS IN LAYING FOUNDATION FOR AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY BUT INDICATES THAT ALP GOVERNMENT IS MAKING " NEW DEFINITIONS OF THE ROLE OF FOREIGN POLICY... DIRECTED TO MAINTAINING THE NATION' S SECURITY AND INTEGRITY." IN THIS CONTEXT WHITLAM RE-EMPHASIZED AUSTRALIA' S SUPPORT FOR ANZUS AND FOR PART ANZUS HAS PLAYED IN ENSURING PEACE AND STABILITY IN REGION OVER PAST 20 YEARS. SECOND POINT OF EMPHASIS IN SPEECH WAS UPON AUSTRALIA' S CURRENT VIEWS OF ITS ECONOMIC RELATIONS WHICH ARE BEING REPORTED IN PART III. END SUMMARY.

2. AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS MAY 25 HEADLINED " WHITLAM PRAISES NIXON THE PEACEMAKER" AND " WHITLAM BACKS AMERICAN ALLIANCE". PERTINENT PORTIONS OF WHITLAM' S SPEECH ARE AS FOLLOWS:

QTE THERE WAS ONE MAN WHOSE POSITION GAVE HIM UNIQUE POWER TO ACHIEVE THESE CHANGES AND I HERE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE PIVOTAL ROLE PLAYED BY PRESIDENT NIXON IN USHERING IN A NEW AND SANER PHASE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH CHINA; IN CLEARING THE WAY FOR MORE INTENSIVE COMMERCIAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION, AND THEREBY ACHIEVING A SUCCESSFUL FIRST ROUND OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS AND IN ENDING FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM. END QTE.

QTE THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR ALLIANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES UNDER ANZUS REMAINS MOST IMPORTANT FOR OUR SECURITY, SINCE BY ITS VERY NATURE IT HAS CREATED AND GUARANTEED IN THE PACIFIC A ZONE OF PEACE IN WHICH THE PEOPLES OF THE REGION HAVE FOR THE LAST 20 YEARS BEEN FREE TO PURSUE THEIR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GOALS WITHOUT FEAR OF HOSTILE INTERVENTION OR ATTACK.

QTE THE ANZUS TREATY REFLECTS A NATURAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE COUNTRIES OF THE PACIFIC. ITS CONTINUATION IS NOT QUESTIONED BY ANY OF ITS PARTNERS. END QTE.

3. INITIAL PRESS REACTION TO SPEECH GENERALLY FAVORABLE, POINTING OUT THAT HISTORICAL BASIS OF AUSTRALIAN POLICY HAS NOT CHANGED DESPITE APPARENT DIFFERENCES IN EMPHASIS BY NEW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOVERNMENT. REPORTS GIVE DUE ATTENTION TO PARTS OF WHITLAM' S SPEECH WHICH SEEM TO INDICATE THAT AUSTRALIA, IN DEFERENCE TO FEELINGS OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WILL TONE DOWN ITS WIDELY PUBLICIZED APPROACH TO CHINA AND ITS SUPPORT OF NEUTRALIZATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN AREA.

4. IN SHORT RESPONSE TO WHITLAM' S SPEECH, FORMER FOREIGN

MINISTER BOWEN PRAISED WHITLAM' S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT CURRENT AUSTRALIAN POLICY OWES DEBT TO POLICY EXPOUNDED BY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA AND WITH COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC. BOWEN CRITICIZED SPEECH, HOWEVER, FOR IMPLYING THAT STYLE OF NEW GOVERNMENT HAD SOMEHOW CLOUDED THE CONTINUITY OF FOREIGN POLICY EVIDENT TO ANY OBJECTIVE OBSERVER.

5. COMMENT: WHITLAM' S REFERENCES TO PRESIDENT AND TO " OUR GREAT ALLY" WELCOMED HERE AS RENEWED INDICATION THAT CURRENT GOVERNMENT SEES ITS FOREIGN POLICY ROLE AS COMPLEMENTARY TO THAT OF THE U. S. AND THE NIXON DOCTRINE. PRIOR TO SPEECH, DCM HAD BEEN INFORMED BY DEPUTY SECRETARY SHANN OF DFA THAT ONE OF MAIN PURPOSES OF SPEECH WAS TO INDICATE PUBLICLY PRAISE AND HIGH REGARD WHICH GOVERNMENT FELT FOR PRESIDENT' S INITIATIVES. IN CONTEXT OF SPEECH ITSELF, WHITLAM INDICATED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT AUSTRALIAN APPROACH TO CHINA WAS DONE IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER APPROACHES BY OTHER COUNTRIES AND SHOULD BE SEEN AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL ENDEAVOR. WHILE POINTING OUT THAT AUSTRALIA IS EMBARKED UPON A DEFINITION OF FOREIGN POLICY WHICH WOULD GIVE CREDENCE TO AN INDEPENDENT STATUS FOR AUSTRALIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS (A GOAL WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN IN PROCESS UNDER THE PREVIOUS LIBERAL- COUNTRY PARTY COALITION GOVERNMENT), WHITLAM NONETHELESS SHOWED CONCERN FOR THE INTERESTS AND SENSITIVITIES OF AUSTRALIA' S ALLIES AND OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. WHITLAM' S SPEECH IS THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT MADE ON FOREIGN POLICY SINCE HIS ACCESSION TO OFFICE IN DECEMBER 1972. IN VIEW OF WHITLAM' S EFFORTS OVER PAST 5 MONTHS TO DRAW CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIS FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT OF PREVIOUS GOVT., FOREGOING SPEECH RECOGNIZES CONTINUITY OF AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS AND SOME OF PRACTICAL REALITIES OF FOREIGN POLICY.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CANBER02922
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730554/aaaajtnq.tel
Line Count: 148
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <29-Aug-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980305
Subject: PRIME MINISTER' S COMPREHENSIVE SPEECH ON AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY MAY 24 PART I OF III
TAGS: PFOR, AS
To: CINCPAC FOR POLAD
CINCPACREP CANBERRA
EA
HONG KONG
SECSTATE WASHDC
SUVA
WELLINGTON

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005